

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 9, line 1 with the following amended paragraph:

Confinement region 110 includes continuous layers 130 and 140 of dielectric material (e.g., polymer, glass) having different refractive indices, as opposed to multiple discrete, concentric layers that form confinement regions in other embodiments. Continuous layers 130 and 140 form a spiral around [[an]] a longitudinal axis 199 along which the photonic crystal fiber waveguide guides electromagnetic radiation. One of the layers, e.g., layer 140, is a high-index layer having an index n_H and a thickness d_H , and the layer, e.g., layer 130, is a low-index layer having an index n_L and a thickness d_L , where $n_H > n_L$ (e.g., $n_H - n_L$ can be greater than or equal to or greater than 0.01, 0.05, 0.1, 0.2, 0.5 or more). Because layers 130 and 140 spiral around axis 199, a radial section 160 extending from axis 199 intersects each of the layers more than once, providing a radial profile that includes alternating high index and low index layers.